Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving, at a network device, an upgrade package over a computer network sent from a client device, the upgrade package including a flash erase file containing null data and upgrade software;

determining upgrade information for a peripheral device installed in the network device, the upgrade information comprising a type and version of the peripheral device and an upgrade process for the peripheral device;

determining if the update package is compatible with the peripheral device based on the upgrade information; and

automatically upgrading internal software of the peripheral device if the upgrade package is compatible with the peripheral device by appending contents of the flash erase file to a packet header, the packet header containing instructions for the peripheral device for overwriting contents of software in the peripheral device with the appended contents, and by transferring the packet header and the upgrade software to the peripheral device by a connection.

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2.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 including recognizing the received package as an upgrade package based on information contained in the upgrade package.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1 including recognizing the received package based on a filename extension associated with the package.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein automatically upgrading the internal software includes:

opening a communications channel to the peripheral device; and

updating the peripheral device with contents of the upgrade package.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein upgrading the peripheral device includes:

setting the peripheral device to an upgrade mode;

parsing contents of the upgrade package into a format suitable for the peripheral device; and

transferring the parsed contents to the peripheral device.

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6.   (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein setting the peripheral device to an upgrade mode includes issuing a command to the peripheral device.

7.   (Canceled).

8.   (Original) The method of claim 1 including sending a message indicating success or failure of the upgrade to a source of the upgrade package.

9.   (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a computer network;

a network device coupled to the network; and

a peripheral device installed within the network device;

wherein the network device comprises a processor configured to:

receive over the network an upgrade package that includes a flash erase file <u>containing null data</u> and upgrade software to update the peripheral device;

determine upgrade information for a peripheral device installed in the network device, the upgrade information comprising a type and version of the peripheral device and an upgrade process for the peripheral device;

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determine if the update package is compatible with the peripheral device based on the upgrade information;

append contents of the flash erase file to a packet header if the peripheral device is compatible with the upgrade information, the packet header containing instructions for the peripheral device to overwrite contents of software in the peripheral device with the appended contents; and

transfer the packet header and the upgrade software to the peripheral device by a connection to automatically upgrade the peripheral device if the contents of the flash erase file are appended to the packet header.

10.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9 wherein the processor is configured to upgrade internal software of the peripheral device with the package.

11.   (Original) The system of claim 9 wherein the network device is configured to recognize the received package as an upgrade package based on information contained in the package.

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12. (Original) The system of claim 9 wherein the network device is configured to recognize the received package as an upgrade package based on a filename extension associated with the package.

13. (Original) The system of claim 9 wherein the processor is configured to:

open a communications channel to the peripheral device; and

upgrade the peripheral device with contents of the upgrade package.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the processor is configured to:
set the peripheral device to an upgrade mode;

parse contents of the upgrade package into a format suitable for the peripheral device; and

transfer the parsed contents to the peripheral device.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14 wherein the processor is configured to set the peripheral device to the upgrade mode by issuing a command to the peripheral device.

16. (Canceled).

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17. (Original) The system of claim 9 wherein the processor is configured to send a message indicating success or failure of the upgrade to a source of the upgrade package.

18. (Currently Amended) An article comprising a computer-readable medium that stores computer-executable instructions for causing a computer system to:

recognize a received package as an upgrade package intended for a peripheral device installed in a network device, the upgrade package including a flash erase file containing null data and upgrade software;

determine upgrade information for a peripheral device installed in the network device, the upgrade information comprising a type and version of the peripheral device and an upgrade process for the peripheral device;

determine if the update package is compatible with the peripheral device based on the upgrade information;

append contents of the flash erase file to a packet header if the peripheral device is compatible with the upgrade information, the packet header containing instructions for the peripheral device to overwrite contents of software in the peripheral device with the appended contents; and

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transfer the packet header and the upgrade software to the peripheral device by a connection to automatically upgrade internal software in the peripheral device if the contents of the flash erase file are appended to the packet header.

19.   (Original) The article of claim 18 including instructions for causing the computer system to recognize the received package as an upgrade package based on information contained in the package.

20.   (Original) The article of claim 18 including instructions for causing the computer system to:

    open a communications channel to the peripheral device; and

    upgrade the peripheral device with contents of the upgrade package.

21.   (Original) The article of claim 20 including instructions for causing the computer system to:

    set the peripheral device to an upgrade mode;

    parse contents of the upgrade package into a format suitable for the peripheral device; and

    transfer the parsed contents to the peripheral device.

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22.   (Original) The article of claim 21 including instructions for causing the computer system to issue a command to the peripheral device in order to set the peripheral device to the upgrade mode.

23.   (Canceled).

24.   (Original) The article of claim 18 including instructions for causing the computer system to send a message indicating success or failure of the upgrade.

25.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

   a port for coupling the apparatus to a network;

   a peripheral device installed in the apparatus; and

   a processor;

   wherein the processor is configured to:

       receive an upgrade package through the port, the upgrade package including a flash erase file containing null data and upgrade software;

       determine upgrade information for a peripheral device installed in the network device, the upgrade information comprising a type and version of the peripheral device and an upgrade process for the peripheral device;

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determine if the update package is compatible
with the peripheral device based on the upgrade
information;

append contents of the flash erase file to a
packet header if the peripheral device is compatible with
the upgrade information, the packet header containing
instructions for the peripheral device to overwrite
contents of software in the peripheral device with the
appended contents; and

transfer the packet header and the upgrade
software to the peripheral device by a connection to
automatically upgrade internal software of the peripheral
device if the contents of the flash erase file are appended
to the packet header.

26.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 25 wherein the
processor is configured to recognize the received package
as an upgrade package based on information contained
therein.

27.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 26 wherein the
processor is configured to recognize the received package
based on a filename extension associated with the package.

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28.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 25 wherein the processor is configured to:

   set the peripheral device to an upgrade mode;

   parse contents of the upgrade package into a format suitable for the peripheral device; and

   transfer the parsed contents to the peripheral device.

29.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 28 wherein the processor is configured to issue a command to cause the peripheral device to enter the upgrade mode.

30.   (Canceled).

31.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein upgrading the internal software of the peripheral device occurs independently of a particular type of operating system on the client device.